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NORTH PACIFIC SEABIRD COLONY DATABASE

To cite these data:

For data supported by a publication, cite the original source. For unpublished data (Bibliographic reference No. 60), this database may be cited as follows:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (year of database report).
North Pacific Seabird Colony Database—computer database and colony status record archives.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Migratory Bird Management, Anchorage, Alaska 99503

An earlier version of this database was published as: Sowls, A.L., S.A. Hatch, and C.J. Lensink, 1978. Catalog of Alaskan Seabird Colonies. U.S. Fish and Wild. Serv., Biol. Services proj. FWS/OBS 78/78. Many data in the 1978 publication have been superseded by this database, but it is still a helpful reference.

The following explanations refer to the table fields.

Map Number: Map number refers to a USGS 1:250,000 quadrangle (1 - 153) for Alaska and 1:500,000 quadrangle (1 - 77) for Russia Far East. These numbers are not the same as official USGS map numbers.

Site Number: A site number refers to a specific colony and is not duplicated within the quadrangle. The complete colony number consists of a map number and a site number.

Site Name: Derived from an official name on USGS map, if one exists; otherwise a descriptive name was invented.

Latitude and longitude: Location of colony in degrees, minutes, and hundredths of minutes.

State: AK = Alaska, RU = Russia Far East.

Survey Type: Method(s) used to census or view the colony. One or more survey types may be listed for each species, especially if the colony is large.

- **A** Aerial survey
- B** Survey from a boat
- C** Census from within colony (observer was among nesting birds while counting them)
- M** Census from land, but distant from colony (observer was on another island or headland, on the shore, etc.)

Date: Month, day, and year of census

Date Interpretation: A code that explains the census date.

- **0** Unknown census month, day, and year.
- 1** Unknown census month and day (but year known).
- 2** Unknown census month and year (but day in the month known).
- 3** Unknown census month (but year and day in the month known).
- 4** Unknown census day and year (but month known).
- 5** Unknown census day (but month and year known).
- 6** Unknown census year (but month and day in the month known).
- 7** Exact date of census (month, day, and year) known.

8 Census took a few days (one week or less). The date listed is date of the census period.

9 Census involved between many (8 or more) and all days in one month.

A Census involved more than one month. The month during which most of the work was completed is listed.

Species: Bird species observed in the colony. The species are listed in standard taxonomic order. "Unidentified" species indicate species in a genus were not distinguished during the census.

Taxonomic Order: A numeric code that places each species in order according to the American Ornithologists' Union checklist.

Number of Birds: All data are numbers of individual adults observed. Some data are listed only as non-numeric estimates ("unknown"); this occurs for all species, but especially for burrow-nesting and nocturnal species.

Number of Nests: Number observed, for species that build obvious nests.

What was Counted: What was counted or estimated in the field by the observer.

- **I** Individuals: Count or estimate of individual breeding birds in colony.

C Nests: Count or estimate of nests or burrows in colony.

B Pairs: Count or estimate of breeding pairs in colony.

O No count or estimate: Observer provided no numeric estimate, only non-numeric data (e.g. "Present" or "Rare")

U Unknown: Observer did not describe what was counted or estimated

Type of Estimate: Type of estimate or count made by the observer. Codes may be qualitative or quantitative.

- **W** Actual count: Exact count of each bird, pair, or nest in colony.

S Known percent of colony: Exact count of birds, pairs, or nests in known fraction of colony area; count extrapolated to total number. Footnote should describe method further.

Z Part counted/part estimated: Exact count on part of colony area; remainder of colony and total number in colony estimated. Footnote should describe method further.

T Count by groups: Count of birds, pairs, or nests by groups (e.g. 10's or 1000's). Footnote should describe method further.

K Count adjusted by observer: Observer adjusted count of individuals, nests, or pairs to give better estimate of total population (e.g. using study of attendance at nests). Footnote should describe method further.

G Observer may have adjusted count: Observer reported number of birds, nests or pairs; did not say whether number was original count or adjusted estimate.

Y Estimate (other), not an actual count: Observer estimated birds, nests, or pairs by some other method. Observer did not make an exact count of individuals or groups, but numbers were provided (e.g. "500 to 1000", or "Thousands"). Footnote should describe method further.

X Present, no estimate: Observer reported breeding birds of this species at colony, but no estimate of numbers.

P Probable: Observer reported breeding birds probably or possibly present at colony, but no estimate of numbers.

V Common or abundant: Observer reported breeding birds common or abundant at colony, but no numerical estimate

R Rare or uncommon: Observer reported breeding birds uncommon or rare at colony, but no estimate of numbers.

U Type of estimate unknown: Census method or accuracy of method unknown (observer did not describe method well).

Conversion: Data conversion. This code describes what the database manager (not the observer) did to adapt the observer's data for entry into the database.

- **L** Literal data from observer: Catalog data are exactly the same as what the observer provided.

2 Nests or pairs: 2X estimate: Observer's data were numbers of nests or pairs. Catalog data are

2 Nests or pairs, 2X estimate. Observer's data were numbers of nests or pairs. Catalog data are original multiplied by 2.

A Midpoint of range: Observer provided a range (e.g. "100 to 250"). Catalog data are midpoint of this range.

D Original >= this number: Observer's data were "greater than N" or "At least N". Catalog data are N.

E 1/2 original estimate: Observer's data were "Less than N"; catalog data are one half of N.

F 3X original estimate: Observer's data were "N's" (e.g., "Thousands"). Catalog data are N X 3.

J Adjusted another way by manager: Manager adjusted observer's data another way. Footnote should describe reason for code.

N Not mentioned by observer: Observer did not mention species in this census, but was looking for it. (Similar to data = "0", but provided by manager instead of observer). Footnote should describe reason for code.

Replication: Data replication. This code indicates whether the data were derived from more than one estimate.

- 1** Single count or estimate: Census data are single count or estimate of numbers in colony.

H Total for sub-areas: Catalog data are total for censuses of several sub-colonies or areas.

M Mean of 2 or more counts: Catalog data are mean of 2 or more replicate counts of whole colony.

U Unknown or unassigned: Observer did not describe method of obtaining total for colony.

Data Quality: The code describes how accurately the census data (Birds) reflects the actual number of each species in the colony. Data quality may vary depending on census conditions, biology of the species, etc. It is very important to evaluate the reliability of all census data by using the codes.

- 1** Data in "Number of Birds" are a precise estimate of the colony population. *Moderate changes among years could probably be detected.* Examples: (a) exact counts of breeding pairs or nests (kittiwakes, gulls, terns, cormorants); (b) counts of individuals adjusted carefully for nest attendance.

2 Data in "Numbers of Birds" are a good estimate of the colony population. *Large changes in numbers could probably be detected.* Examples: (a) exact counts of birds, where all are visible (e.g., murres, kittiwakes, gulls, terns); (b) counts of guillemots on an early-morning high tide before nesting; (c) counts of occupied burrows in a precisely-measured area.

3 The data in "Numbers of birds" are only a rough estimate of the colony population. *Only very large changes in populations can be detected.* Examples: (a) many counts of part of a colony; (b) exact counts of birds that nest underground (e.g., puffins, guillemots), except special studies where all birds were visible; (c) most counts of birds by groups rather than individually. (Note: Data Quality 3 is much lower than Data Quality 1 and 2).

4 The data in "Numbers of Birds" are completely unreliable to indicate the colony population. **These data should not be used to infer any changes in population, however large.** Examples: (a) estimates under poor conditions; (b) estimates that were mostly non-breeding birds; (c) all non-numeric estimates ("Present", "Rare", etc.).

U No Data Quality code can be assigned, because the observer did not describe methods adequately.

Site Use: Describes what the birds were doing at the colony.

- S = Breeding;** Breeding birds only

R = Roosting; Roosting birds, not breeding

T = BreedRst; Breeding and roosting birds in count

I = Exotics; Introduced species (e.g. foxes, rats)

M = Haul-out; Marine mammal haul-out

O = Offshore; Seen offshore, not next to colony

U = Unknown; Site use unknown

Bibliography Number: Bibliographic reference. Numbers refer to list of citations. Any citations listed as "unknown" are currently being entered into the computer and can be obtained from the database manager. If there is more than one citation per species, other reference numbers are in notes for this species.

Observers: Who censused the birds, for the species listed. May be different from authors of cited literature.

Notes: Characteristics of data that need more explanation than provided by codes.

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